

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

LISA PIO
2722 Ash St.
Philadelphia, PA 19137

Plaintiff,

v.

THE LAW OFFICES OF
JOEL J. KOFSKY, P.C.
1500 JFK Blvd., Suite 550
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Defendant.

CIVIL ACTION

No. _____

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

CIVIL ACTION COMPLAINT

Plaintiff, by and through her undersigned counsel, hereby avers as follows:

INTRODUCTION

1. This action has been initiated by Lisa Pio (*hereinafter* referred to as “Plaintiff,” unless indicated otherwise) against The Law Offices of Joel J. Kofsky, P.C. (*hereinafter* referred to as “Defendant” unless indicated otherwise) for violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA” -42 USC §§ 12101 *et. seq.*) and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act (“PHRA”).¹ As a direct consequence of Defendant’s unlawful actions, Plaintiff seeks damages as set forth herein.

¹ Plaintiff’s claims under the PHRA are referenced herein for notice purposes. She is required to wait 1 full year before initiating a lawsuit from date of dual-filing with the EEOC. Plaintiff must however file her lawsuit in advance of same because of the date of issuance of her federal right-to-sue letter under the ADA. Plaintiff’s PHRA claims however will mirror identically her federal claims under the ADA.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

2. This Court, in accordance with 28 U.S.C. § 1331, has jurisdiction over Plaintiff's claims because this civil action arises under laws of the United States.

3. This Court may properly maintain personal jurisdiction over Defendant because Defendant's contacts with this state and this judicial district are sufficient for the exercise of jurisdiction over Defendant to comply with traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice, satisfying the standard set forth by the United States Supreme Court in International Shoe Co. v. Washington, 326 U.S. 310 (1945) and its progeny.

4. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(1) and (b)(2), venue is properly laid in this district because all of the acts and/or omissions giving rise to the claims set forth herein occurred in this judicial district, and in addition, Defendant is deemed to reside where it is subject to personal jurisdiction, rendering Defendant a resident of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

5. Plaintiff is proceeding herein under the ADA and has properly exhausted her administrative remedies with respect to such claims by timely filing a Charge of Discrimination with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC") and by filing the instant lawsuit within ninety (90) days of receiving a notice of dismissal and/or right to sue letter from the EEOC.

PARTIES

6. The foregoing paragraphs are incorporated herein in their entirety as if set forth in full.

7. Plaintiff is an adult individual, with an address as set forth in the caption.

8. Defendant is a law firm located at the above-captioned address, primarily practicing in personal injury law.

9. At all times relevant herein, Defendant acted by and through its agents, servants and employees, each of whom acted at all times relevant herein in the course and scope of their employment with and for Defendant.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

10. The foregoing paragraphs are incorporated herein in their entirety as if set forth in full.

11. Plaintiff was hired to work for Defendant in or about the beginning of October, 2019 as a paralegal.

12. Throughout her employment with Defendant, Plaintiff was generally supervised by Office Manager, Colleen Russo (“Russo”).

13. Even though Plaintiff was primarily supervised by Russo during the course of her employment with Defendant, Owner and Attorney Joel Kofsky also had indirect supervision over Plaintiff as well.

14. In March of 2019, prior to her employment with Defendant, Plaintiff was diagnosed with kidney cancer and underwent surgery to have a cancerous mass removed from her kidney.²

15. Despite her aforesaid health condition, Plaintiff remained a dedicated and hard-working employee who was not subject to any written discipline during her tenure with Defendant (for performance reasons or otherwise).

16. On or about October 29, 2019, Plaintiff disclosed her aforesaid health condition to Russo in writing, explaining that she had a large cancerous mass removed from her kidney in

² Plaintiff also had half of her kidney removed during this procedure.

March and that because she was not covered by health insurance; she was unable to take medication for her health condition.

17. Plaintiff further informed Russo in writing on October 29, 2019 that because she was unable to take medication for her health condition, she sometimes felt ill – but would continue to work through it.

18. On or about November 4, 2019 (only four business days after disclosing her health condition to Defendant's management), Plaintiff was informed by Russo that she was being terminated from her employment with Defendant.

19. Plaintiff's termination was extremely abrupt and she was not provided with a reason as to why she was being involuntarily separated from her employment.

20. In Defendant's position statement submitted to the EEOC in response to Plaintiff's complaint of discrimination, Defendant claims that Plaintiff was terminated for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to poor performance and inappropriate behavior (including making comments to multiple staff members that made them feel uncomfortable).

21. It is clear that Defendant's reasons for terminating Plaintiff are completely pretextual as (1) she was never disciplined for any of the reasons that Defendant claims she was terminated for during her employment with Defendant; and (2) she was terminated only 4 business days after apprising Defendant's management of her aforesaid health condition.

First Cause of Action
Violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended ("ADA")
(Actual/Perceived/Record of Disability Discrimination)

22. The foregoing paragraphs are incorporated herein in their entirety as if set forth in full.

23. Plaintiff suffered from qualifying health conditions under the ADA which caused her to become ill and depressed and limited her ability to sleep (among other daily life activities).

24. Plaintiff was terminated from her employment with Defendant on or about November 4, 2019, only four business days after apprising Defendant's management of her aforesaid medical conditions.

25. Plaintiff believes and therefore avers that she was terminated from her employment with Defendant because of her known, perceived, and/or record of disabilities.

26. These actions aforesaid constitute violations of the ADA.

Count II
Violations of the Pennsylvania Wage and Collection Law ("PWCL")
(Non-payment of full wages / Unlawful Wage Retention)

27. The foregoing paragraphs are incorporated herein in their entirety as if set forth in full.

28. At the time of her hire, Plaintiff was offered employment with Defendant as a paralegal, earning \$19.00 per hour.

29. Under the Pennsylvania Wage Payment a Collection Law ("WPCL"), Plaintiff was contractually due \$19.00 per hour for every hour that she performed work for Defendant.

30. However, during the entire month that Plaintiff was employed with Defendant, she was never paid the hourly rate that she was promised and no one ever informed Plaintiff that her rate of pay was being reduced.

31. It was not until after Plaintiff was terminated on November 4, 2020 that she reviewed her paychecks and realized that she was being paid substantially less than she was guaranteed by Defendant when she began her employment.

32. In fact, Plaintiff was only paid an hourly rate of 14.58 per hour (or a salary of \$1166.89 bi-weekly).

33. Furthermore, while Plaintiff worked 40 hours per week, her paychecks did not reflect this. Instead, her first two paychecks only provided the “salary” that Plaintiff was paid rather than the amount of hours she worked or her hourly rate.

34. Plaintiff continued to be paid by the method described in Paragraph 33 until her last paycheck, at which point in time, Defendant changed her pay rate to \$17.31 per hour for 5 hours of work (a completely different hourly rate than what she was being paid previously – but still less than her promised hourly rate of \$19.00 per hour, discussed *supra*).

35. Defendant’s failure to pay Plaintiff the hourly rate that she was promised at the time of her hire is a violation of the WPCL³

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff prays that this Court enter an Order providing that:

A. Defendant is to compensate Plaintiff, reimburse Plaintiff, and make Plaintiff whole for any and all pay and benefits Plaintiff would have received had it not been for Defendant’s illegal actions, including but not limited to back pay, front pay, salary, pay increases, bonuses, insurance, benefits, training, promotions, reinstatement, and seniority.

B. Plaintiff is to be awarded punitive and/or liquidated damages, as permitted by applicable law, in an amount believed by the Court or trier of fact to be appropriate to punish

³ *Oberneder v. Link Comput. Corp.*, 548 Pa. 201, 206, 696 A.2d 148, 151 (1997)(“The Wage Payment and Collection Law provides employees a statutory remedy to recover wages and other benefits that are contractually due to them.”)

Defendant for its willful, deliberate, malicious and outrageous conduct and to deter Defendant or other employers from engaging in such misconduct in the future;

C. Plaintiff is to be accorded other equitable and legal relief as the Court deems just, proper, and appropriate (including but not limited to damages for emotional distress / pain and suffering);

D. Plaintiff is to be awarded the costs and expenses of this action and reasonable attorney's fees as provided by applicable federal and state law.

Respectfully submitted,

KARPF, KARPF & CERUTTI, P.C.

By: 

Ari R. Karpf, Esq.
3331 Street Road
Two Greenwood Square, Suite 128
Bensalem, PA 19020
(215) 639-0801

Dated: April 21, 2020

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

CASE MANAGEMENT TRACK DESIGNATION FORM

Lisa Pio

CIVIL ACTION

v.

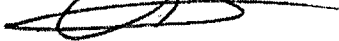
The Law Offices of Joel J. Kofsky, P.C.

NO.

In accordance with the Civil Justice Expense and Delay Reduction Plan of this court, counsel for plaintiff shall complete a Case Management Track Designation Form in all civil cases at the time of filing the complaint and serve a copy on all defendants. (See § 1:03 of the plan set forth on the reverse side of this form.) In the event that a defendant does not agree with the plaintiff regarding said designation, that defendant shall, with its first appearance, submit to the clerk of court and serve on the plaintiff and all other parties, a Case Management Track Designation Form specifying the track to which that defendant believes the case should be assigned.

SELECT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CASE MANAGEMENT TRACKS:

- (a) Habeas Corpus – Cases brought under 28 U.S.C. § 2241 through § 2255. ()
- (b) Social Security – Cases requesting review of a decision of the Secretary of Health and Human Services denying plaintiff Social Security Benefits. ()
- (c) Arbitration – Cases required to be designated for arbitration under Local Civil Rule 53.2. ()
- (d) Asbestos – Cases involving claims for personal injury or property damage from exposure to asbestos. ()
- (e) Special Management – Cases that do not fall into tracks (a) through (d) that are commonly referred to as complex and that need special or intense management by the court. (See reverse side of this form for a detailed explanation of special management cases.) ()
- (f) Standard Management – Cases that do not fall into any one of the other tracks. (X)

<u>4/21/2020</u>		<u>Plaintiff</u>
Date	Attorney-at-law	Attorney for
<u>(215) 639-0801</u>	<u>(215) 639-4970</u>	<u>akarpf@karpf-law.com</u>
Telephone	FAX Number	E-Mail Address

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

DESIGNATION FORM

(to be used by counsel or pro se plaintiff to indicate the category of the case for the purpose of assignment to the appropriate calendar)

Address of Plaintiff: 2722 Ash Street, Philadelphia, PA 19137

Address of Defendant: 1500 JFK Blvd., Suite 550, Philadelphia, PA 19102

Place of Accident, Incident or Transaction: Defendant's place of business

RELATED CASE, IF ANY:

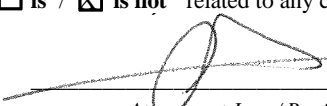
Case Number: _____ Judge: _____ Date Terminated: _____

Civil cases are deemed related when **Yes** is answered to any of the following questions:

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|--|
| 1. Is this case related to property included in an earlier numbered suit pending or within one year previously terminated action in this court? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Does this case involve the same issue of fact or grow out of the same transaction as a prior suit pending or within one year previously terminated action in this court? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Does this case involve the validity or infringement of a patent already in suit or any earlier numbered case pending or within one year previously terminated action of this court? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Is this case a second or successive habeas corpus, social security appeal, or pro se civil rights case filed by the same individual? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

I certify that, to my knowledge, the within case ☐ is / ☒ is not related to any case now pending or within one year previously terminated action in this court except as noted above.

DATE: 4/21/2020


Attorney-at-Law / Pro Se Plaintiff

ARK2484 / 91538

Attorney I.D. # (if applicable)

CIVIL: (Place a ✓ in one category only)

A. Federal Question Cases:

- ☐ 1. Indemnity Contract, Marine Contract, and All Other Contracts
- ☐ 2. FELA
- ☐ 3. Jones Act-Personal Injury
- ☐ 4. Antitrust
- ☐ 5. Patent
- ☐ 6. Labor-Management Relations
- ☒ 7. Civil Rights
- ☐ 8. Habeas Corpus
- ☐ 9. Securities Act(s) Cases
- ☐ 10. Social Security Review Cases
- ☐ 11. All other Federal Question Cases
(Please specify): _____

B. Diversity Jurisdiction Cases:

- ☐ 1. Insurance Contract and Other Contracts
- ☐ 2. Airplane Personal Injury
- ☐ 3. Assault, Defamation
- ☐ 4. Marine Personal Injury
- ☐ 5. Motor Vehicle Personal Injury
- ☐ 6. Other Personal Injury (Please specify): _____
- ☐ 7. Products Liability
- ☐ 8. Products Liability – Asbestos
- ☐ 9. All other Diversity Cases
(Please specify): _____

ARBITRATION CERTIFICATION

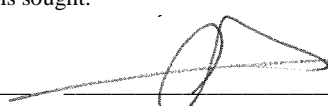
(The effect of this certification is to remove the case from eligibility for arbitration.)

I, Ari R. Karpf, counsel of record or pro se plaintiff, do hereby certify:

☒ Pursuant to Local Civil Rule 53.2, § 3(c) (2), that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the damages recoverable in this civil action case exceed the sum of \$150,000.00 exclusive of interest and costs:

☐ Relief other than monetary damages is sought.

DATE: 4/21/2020


Attorney-at-Law / Pro Se Plaintiff

ARK2484 / 91538

Attorney I.D. # (if applicable)

NOTE: A trial de novo will be a trial by jury only if there has been compliance with F.R.C.P. 38.

CIVIL COVER SHEET

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.)

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS

PIO, LISA

(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff Philadelphia

(EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)

(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number)

Karpf, Karpf & Cerutti, P.C.; 3331 Street Road, Two Greenwood Square, Suite 128, Bensalem, PA 19020; (215) 639-0801; akarpf@karpf-law.com

DEFENDANTS

THE LAW OFFICES OF JOEL J. KOFSKY, P.C.

County of Residence of First Listed Defendant Philadelphia

(IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY)

NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED.

Attorneys (If Known)

II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff ☒ 3 Federal Question (U.S. Government Not a Party)
- 2 U.S. Government Defendant ☐ 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III)

III. CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES (Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff and One Box for Defendant)

	PTF	DEF		PTF	DEF
Citizen of This State	1	1	Incorporated or Principal Place of Business In This State	4	4
Citizen of Another State	2	2	Incorporated and Principal Place of Business In Another State	5	5
Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country	3	3	Foreign Nation	6	6

IV. NATURE OF SUIT (Place an "X" in One Box Only)Click here for: [Nature of Suit Code Descriptions.](#)

CONTRACT	TORTS		FORFEITURE/PENALTY	BANKRUPTCY	OTHER STATUTES
<div><input type="checkbox"/> 110 Insurance</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 120 Marine</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 130 Miller Act</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 140 Negotiable Instrument</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 151 Medicare Act</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loans (Excludes Veterans)</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 153 Recovery of Overpayment of Veteran's Benefits</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 160 Stockholders' Suits</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 190 Other Contract</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 195 Contract Product Liability</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 196 Franchise</div>	<div>PERSONAL INJURY</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 310 Airplane</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 315 Airplane Product Liability</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 320 Assault, Libel & Slander</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 330 Federal Employers' Liability</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 340 Marine</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 345 Marine Product Liability</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 350 Motor Vehicle</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 355 Motor Vehicle Product Liability</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 360 Other Personal Injury</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 362 Personal Injury - Medical Malpractice</div>	<div>PERSONAL INJURY</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 365 Personal Injury - Product Liability</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 367 Health Care/Pharmaceutical Personal Injury Product Liability</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 368 Asbestos Personal Injury Product Liability</div> <div>PERSONAL PROPERTY</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 370 Other Fraud</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 371 Truth in Lending</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 380 Other Personal Property Damage</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 385 Property Damage Product Liability</div>	<div><input type="checkbox"/> 625 Drug Related Seizure of Property 21 USC 881</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 690 Other</div> <div>LABOR</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 710 Fair Labor Standards Act</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 720 Labor/Management Relations</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 740 Railway Labor Act</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 751 Family and Medical Leave Act</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 790 Other Labor Litigation</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 791 Employee Retirement Income Security Act</div> <div>IMMIGRATION</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 462 Naturalization Application</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 465 Other Immigration Actions</div>	<div><input type="checkbox"/> 422 Appeal 28 USC 158</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 423 Withdrawal 28 USC 157</div> <div>PROPERTY RIGHTS</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 820 Copyrights</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 830 Patent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 835 Patent - Abbreviated New Drug Application</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 840 Trademark</div> <div>SOCIAL SECURITY</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 861 HIA (1395ff)</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 862 Black Lung (923)</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 863 DIWC/DIWW (405(g))</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 864 SSID Title XVI</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 865 RSI (405(g))</div> <div>FEDERAL TAX SUITS</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 870 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant)</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 871 IRS—Third Party 26 USC 7609</div>	<div><input type="checkbox"/> 375 False Claims Act</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 376 Qui Tam (31 USC 3729(a))</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 400 State Reapportionment</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 410 Antitrust</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 430 Banks and Banking</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 450 Commerce</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 460 Deportation</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 470 Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 480 Consumer Credit</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 490 Cable/Sat TV</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 850 Securities/Commodities/Exchange</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 890 Other Statutory Actions</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 891 Agricultural Acts</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 893 Environmental Matters</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 895 Freedom of Information Act</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 896 Arbitration</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 899 Administrative Procedure Act/Review or Appeal of Agency Decision</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 950 Constitutionality of State Statutes</div>
REAL PROPERTY	CIVIL RIGHTS	PRISONER PETITIONS			
<div><input type="checkbox"/> 210 Land Condemnation</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 220 Foreclosure</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 240 Torts to Land</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 245 Tort Product Liability</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 290 All Other Real Property</div>	<div><input type="checkbox"/> 440 Other Civil Rights</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 441 Voting</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 442 Employment</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 443 Housing/Accommodations</div> <div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 445 Amer. w/Disabilities - Employment</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 446 Amer. w/Disabilities - Other</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 448 Education</div>	<div>Habeas Corpus:</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 463 Alien Detainee</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 510 Motions to Vacate Sentence</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 530 General</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 535 Death Penalty</div> <div>Other:</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 540 Mandamus & Other</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 550 Civil Rights</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 555 Prison Condition</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> 560 Civil Detainee - Conditions of Confinement</div>			

V. ORIGIN (Place an "X" in One Box Only)

- ☒ 1 Original Proceeding
 ☐ 2 Removed from State Court
 ☐ 3 Remanded from Appellate Court
 ☐ 4 Reinstated or Reopened
 ☐ 5 Transferred from Another District (specify)
 ☐ 6 Multidistrict Litigation - Transfer
 ☐ 8 Multidistrict Litigation - Direct File

VI. CAUSE OF ACTION

Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing (Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity): ADA (42USC12101)

Brief description of cause: Violations of the ADA and the PA Human Relations Act.

VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:
☐ CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDER RULE 23, F.R.Cv.P. DEMAND \$

CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint:

JURY DEMAND: ☒ Yes ☐ No**VIII. RELATED CASE(S) IF ANY**

(See instructions):

JUDGE

DOCKET NUMBER

DATE

4/21/2020

SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OF RECORD

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

RECEIPT #

AMOUNT

APPLYING IFP

JUDGE

MAG. JUDGE

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